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8.5% INTEREST ON EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUND FOR 2020-21

The Union finance ministry on Friday approved 8.5% rate of interest on Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) for 2020-21

DECISION TO BENEFIT FIVE CRORE SUBSCRIBERS

Announced just ahead of Diwali, the move comes as good news for over five crore subscribers of the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). The EPFO in March last year had lowered the interest rate on provident fund deposits from 8.65% in 2018-19 to 8.5% for 2019-20. The EPF interest rate provided for 2019-20 was the lowest since 2012-13

15 LAKH NEW MEMBERS ADDED IN AUGUST

- 8.5% interest was decided by the Central Board of Trustees, the EPFO's apex decision making body led by Union labour minister
- The labour ministry has to notify interest for the year before EPFO starts crediting it into the beneficiary accounts
- The retirement fund body added 14.81 lakh subscribers in August



BALANCE CAN BE CHECKED BY GIVING A MISSED CALL TO 011-22901406

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PUNEETH, RULER OF HEARTS, NO MORE

Popular actor passes away after heart attack; Mortal remains kept at Kanteerava Stadium; Funeral on Sunday with full state honours

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

POPULAR actor, singer and producer Puneeth Rajkumar died after a massive heart attack at an early age on Friday leaving millions of his admirers heartbroken. The last rites will be held at Kanteerava Studios on Sunday with full state honours.

Fondly called 'Appu' and titled 'Power Star' by his fans, the 46-year-old actor was the son of Kannada thespian, late Rajkumar and Parvathamamma.

Puneeth's friends and relatives said that he was at the birthday party of music director Gurukiran till about 11.30 pm on Thursday night, after which he retired to bed with a sense of uneasiness throughout the night. He reportedly woke up on Friday morning around 9.30 am and was exercising at the gym in his Sadashivanagar residence, which was his routine. Around 10.15 am, he collapsed during the workout and was rushed to a nearby hospital.

The actor was conscious then, but an electrocardiogram (ECG) conducted revealed severe variations and the doctors referred him to Vikram Hospital on Millers Road, where his condition was reported to be 'unresponsive'.

As news of his health condition spread like wildfire, thousands of fans converged on the hospital.

Within minutes, the actor's family members, including his actor-brother Shivarajkumar, who was visiting cinemas as his new movie 'Bhajarangi-2' hit the screens just a few hours ago, rushed to the hospital. Senior Sandalwood personalities, including actors V Ravi-



chandran, Shruthi, producer Rockline Venkatesh and others, visited the hospital and emerged with worried faces. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai too reached the hospital around 1 pm.

The doctors spent at least two hours trying to revive Puneeth, but the efforts proved futile and he was officially declared dead at 2.30 pm. An official announcement was made by minister R Ashoka at 3.15 pm.

Doctors explained the death to have been caused by myocardial infarction (MI) — death of tissues in the heart muscle due to lack of oxygen delivery to parts of the heart.

Dr Ranganath Nayak, Cardiologist, Vikram Hospitals (a unit of Manipal Hospital), said Puneeth was brought to the hospital with no cardiac activity. P4

INSIDE FOR ONE LAST GLIMPSE OF THE 'RAAJAKUMARA'

KMF AMBASSADOR
WITHOUT PAY

GRIEF HANGS HEAVY
OVER GAJANUR VILLAGE

P4



Fans gather outside Vikram Hospital at Vasanth Nagar in Bengaluru after hearing about the untimely death of Power Star Puneeth Rajkumar on Friday | VIKRAM KUMAR

"A cruel twist of fate has snatched away from us a prolific and talented actor, Puneeth Rajkumar. This was no age to go. The coming generations will remember him fondly for his works and wonderful personality. Condolences to his family and admirers. Om Shanti."

— Prime Minister
Narendra Modi

Shocked and deeply saddened as Karnataka's most loved superstar Puneeth Rajkumar is no longer with us. A huge personal loss and one that's difficult to come to terms with. Praying the almighty gives the Rajkumar family and fans the strength to bear this loss

— Chief Minister
Basavaraj Bommai

Sudden end to Appu's scintillating journey

A SHARADHAA @Bengaluru

A film icon's son, but a star in his own right. A star, but a humble soul. Wealthy, but an open-hearted giver. That was Kannada film star Puneeth Rajkumar, who passed away after a heart attack in Bengaluru on Friday at the young age of 46.

'Power Star' to crores of his fans, Puneeth was a child artiste, making his screen debut when he was just six months old in the super-hit movie Premada Kanke. The lead role was essayed by his father — the matinee idol Dr Rajkumar.

Born on March 17, 1975, the third and last son of Dr Rajkumar and Parvathamamma, Puneeth was known as Lohith in his initial days of acting.

He won the national award when he was just 10 years old for his memorable performance as Ramu in the movie Bettada Hoovu. As a much-loved child artiste, he worked in 14 films, including Vasantha Geetha (1980), Bhagyavantha (1981) and Chalisuva Modagalu (1982).

He made his full-fledged debut as a lead actor with Appu (2002), which was a runaway



hit. The streak continued with his second film Abhi and he went to act in 29 more movies, many of them super hits. But it was Jackie and Anna Bond that took him to the stratosphere of superstardom. The biggest box-office collection, however, came

from Rajakumara, which earned a little less than Rs 100 crore, while the spend was just one-tenth of that. His intense roles in Prithvi and Mythri made a mark with the critics too. Apart from his national award, he won six state film awards, including two for best actor in Milana and Jackie. One of the highest-paid stars of the industry, he had, at the time of passing on, almost completed shooting for James. The production of 90-minute Gandhara Gudi is over and its release dates were to be announced on November 1. P4

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TAKE YOUR SHOT	October 29	51,58,251 doses
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NATIONWIDE:	OCT 28	OCT 29
Fresh cases	16,156	14,348
Recoveries	17,095	13,198
Deaths	733	805
KARNATAKA:	OCT 28	OCT 29
Fresh cases	478	381
Recoveries	334	305
Deaths	17	7



UP win must for 2024 encore: Shah

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Lucknow

UNION home minister Amit Shah on Friday blew the Assembly poll bugle in Uttar Pradesh, saying a thumping victory for the Yogi Adityanath government in early 2022 will pave the way for an equally emphatic win for the Modi government in the 2024 general elections.

Launching the party's mega membership campaign, the former national BJP president complimented the state government for good governance.

"I'm confident that the good governance ushered by the Yogi government will go a long way in achieving the goal of 300-plus seats in next year's Assembly polls. Let me put it simply. It's UP that enabled Narendra Modi to form a majority government at the

Centre in 2014 and 2019." It's time to render the same majority to the BJP in the 2022 polls, Shah said.

Claiming that the BJP government in UP had fulfilled 90% of the promises it made in its 2017 manifesto, Shah said efforts are on to deliver on the rest of the wish-list within the next two months.

He reiterated that the BJP has already fulfilled two of its key pledges — building a grand Ram Temple at Ayodhya and hollowing Article 370 in J&K.

"UP is the land of Lord Vishwanath, Lord Ram, Gautam Buddha, Jain saints and BHU founder Madan Mohan Malviya. The Yogi government restored the pristine glory of the state, getting rid of the Mughal culture that prevailed during his predecessors' regimes," he claimed.



Marathon meetings

Later in the day, Amit Shah held marathon meetings with top organisational leaders to assess the party's poll preparedness

ACROSS STATE

3rd sero survey next week, to include children

RANJANI MADHAVAN @Bengaluru

KARNATAKA will conduct its third Covid sero survey in another week following advice from the Covid Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), confirmed state Health Commissioner Randeep D. Though the protocol will be the same as the last two sero surveys, children will be included this time, said Dr Pradeep Banandur, head of the epidemiology department at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) and member of TAC.

A sero survey is used to estimate the prevalence of antibodies against a specific infectious pathogen as an indicator of immunity.

"The protocol has been laid out and a go-ahead has been given to the procurement committee as we need reagents. This time, some portion of the population to be sampled will have received the Covid vaccination, so we have to take that bias into account. Antibodies detected may be due to natural infection or vaccination," Randeep said.

Dr Banandur, however, said that there is no need to know if the immunity is derived from vaccination or natural infection. P3

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Aryan Khan's wait for release from jail gets longer

Actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan, granted by the Bombay High Court in the cruise ship drugs case, was not released on Friday as his release papers did not reach jail authorities in time. A special court issued the release memo in the evening but Aryan's legal team could not meet the 5.30 pm deadline for its submission. The HC has imposed 14 conditions on Aryan, including ₹1 lakh bond and weekly visit to the NCB office in Mumbai | P10

3-year extension for RBI governor Shaktikanta Das

New Delhi: The Centre has extended the term of RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das by three more years — a tenure that will make him one of the longest serving heads of the central bank. The retired IAS officer was appointed RBI's 25th governor on December 11, 2018 for three years after the surprise resignation of Urjit Patel. According to an official order dated October 28, the reappointment is till December 2024 | P13

Justice Ramalingam Sudhakar appointed NCLT prez

New Delhi: The Centre has appointed Justice Ramalingam Sudhakar, ex-chief justice of Manipur High Court, president of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). Besides, the government has appointed former Supreme Court judge Ashok Bhushan the chairperson of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT). Both the NCLT and NCLAT are getting permanent heads after more than one-and-a-half years | P13